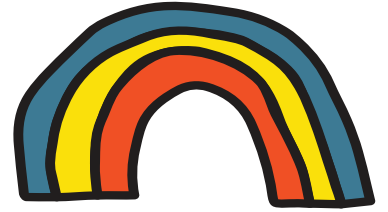


# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?



You've probably heard the term *mental health*, but might not quite know what it is. Mental health includes how we think, feel and act. It also helps guide how we handle worry, relate to other people and make decisions. It's a broad term that covers a range of emotions and illnesses that people may need support to cope with.

If you're physically hurt or ill, it's usually easy to see and describe in words. But because we don't wear our thoughts on our sleeves, mental health can be harder to understand and talk about.

**Part 1:** Below are some statements about mental health. Some of them are true (facts), and some are not (myths). On the right side of the table, write "True" or "False" based on what you know.

STATEMENT	TRUE OR FALSE?
1. Keeping your brain in shape is just as important as physical fitness.	
2. Mental illnesses are not really something teens struggle with.	
3. You can tell how someone is feeling or if they have a mental illness just by looking at them or listening to what they're saying.	
4. Friends and family can make a big difference in supporting each other's mental health.	
5. Someone with lots of friends, good grades and lots of talents is always happy.	
6. Mental health should only be discussed between a patient and professional.	

**Part 2:** The terms below describe some mental health terms. Match each term to its definition by writing the correct letter on each line.

MENTAL HEALTH TERMS	DEFINITIONS
1. ___ "good" stress	A. Severe or ongoing feelings that we cannot meet demands or make it through a challenge. This can affect mental and physical health and can reduce quality of life.
2. ___ self-care	B. Pressure we feel during challenging occasions or tasks (like playing a sport or singing in a concert) that motivates us to prepare and perform
3. ___ "bad" stress	C. This practice involves thinking and talking about things you are thankful for. Building this habit can help boost your mood and remind you of the good things in your life.
4. ___ protective factors	D. Behavior that decreases the risk of mental illness, reduces the effects of worrying or improves mental health
5. ___ gratitude	E. Behaviors that include eating healthy, getting good sleep, moving a little bit every day and creating positive relationships with family and friends to help keep the mind fit and healthy

**Part 3: Take a Day Time Break!** Just as you practice a sport or activity to get better at it, you can also practice improving your mental health. One way to do that is by thinking about things and people that make you feel good and that you're thankful for. On the back of this sheet, list five things or people that you're thankful or grateful for. Keep your list and add to it as a way of supporting your mental health.

**REMEMBER:** It's ok not to feel ok. If you're ever struggling, reach out to a trusted adult like a parent, family member, teacher, coach, or guidance counselor.

